

**Testimony from Doug Borruso**  
**February 21, 2007**

Good morning. My name is Doug Borruso, Government Affairs Manager for the Michigan Osteopathic Association, representing 5,000 osteopathic physicians and medical students across Michigan. I'm here today supporting the Coalition Protecting Auto No-Fault, and I'd like to thank the Chairman, and the members of this committee for giving me, and all of us, the opportunity to testify before you today.

One of the most important roles the Michigan Osteopathic Association plays is serving as the voice of osteopathic physicians with the state legislature. On a daily basis, we consider ourselves a critical component in improving the quality of care in the state of Michigan, be it through advocating for the protection of the Medicaid program or seeking to improve access to care and patient safety.

As physicians, our members have a sincere concern for the well being of their patients. Of course, this means providing the highest quality health care and health management. But our doctors' interest in their patients goes beyond just the examination room. Our doctors are passionate about what they do, and they are committed to helping their patients live happy, vibrant lives. Our members are overwhelmingly primary care and family physicians. Our doctors see generations of the same family, and have relationships with them based on friendship and trust, not only the doctor-patient relationship. So when external political factors influence the ability to care for our patients, we are compelled to have our voice heard. And that is why I'm here today — to urge the state legislature to fix what's become known as The Kreiner Travesty.

Historically our automotive no-fault system has been regarded as the best in the nation, and virtually every Michigan citizen has benefited or knows someone who has benefited, either directly or indirectly from this system. However, due in large part to the Supreme Court's decision in the Kreiner case, our landmark no-fault system is severely threatened.

The Kreiner decision has thrown out the balance that Michigan's no-fault system needs to thrive. Because of Kreiner, quality of life issues have been put on the backburner in place of a lofty definition of threshold and by language that was never contained or referenced to in any way in the original statute.

It is commonplace in Lansing and throughout our society to reduce important issues to data and statistics. Our patients are not numbers – they are people, each one different. They are our sons and daughters, our brothers and sisters, our mothers and fathers, our neighbors and co-workers. Our patients are not hypothetical; they are people — which is something supporters of Kreiner would do well to remember.

The Michigan Osteopathic Association has joined a broad based coalition consisting of patients' rights advocates, health care associations, citizen action groups, medical professional organizations, consumer advocacy groups, trial lawyers and labor organizations. Strange bedfellows to be certain, but all united in support of CPAN's efforts to urge the state legislature and the executive branch to fix the Kreiner travesty.

This is not, and should not, be a partisan issue. Rather, this is about repairing a system that is broken, and the people who elected you need your help. Because victims of devastating automobile accidents — including those who are being denied the quality of life they had come to expect — are both business owners and laborers, Republicans and Democrats, the young and the elderly, men and women, black and white, and liberals and conservatives — and all deserve fair and equal treatment that Michigan's no-fault system was established to guarantee.

Our members are concerned about making sure their patients are treated fairly. These people have suffered serious medical injuries and we want to guarantee injustice is not heaped upon injury. Kreiner allows this to happen, and it must stop.

For 33 years Michigan's automotive no-fault system has helped innocent victims in Michigan get the health care they need and deserve. Please, on behalf of the 5,000 members of the Michigan Osteopathic Association and our countless patients — fix Kreiner, and fix it NOW. Let's not allow Kreiner to ruin yet another single life.

I thank you for your time.